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{{Infobox martial art
| name = Gushtingiri
| image = <!-- Add appropriate image here -->
| focus = Grappling, Traditional
| country = {{IRN}}, {{TJK}}, Central Asian countries
| creator = Unknown (Ancient origin)
| olympic = No
}}

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'''Gushtingiri''' (also known as '''Gushtin''') is one of the oldest traditional wrestling styles, originating from the ancient civilizations of West and Central Asia. Historical and archaeological evidence suggests that this sport was practiced over 6,000 years ago among peoples such as the [[Sumerians]], [[Persians]], [[Ancient Egyptians]], and [[Greeks]].

== History ==

The earliest known evidence of wrestling dates back to Sumer, an ancient civilization of southern Mesopotamia. In 1938, archaeologists from the University of Pennsylvania, led by Dr. Speer, discovered two tablets near the temple of Gyanaja, close to Baghdad. One was stone-carved with wrestlers in action, and the other, made of bronze, depicted two figures locked in combat. These artifacts are believed to date back over six millennia.

In [[Ancient Persia]], Gushtingiri held a prestigious status within royal courts, particularly during the [[Achaemenid Empire]]. Under [[Artaxerxes II]], Greek mercenaries with experience in ancient Olympic games introduced new forms of wrestling in Persia.

The tradition of Gushtingiri is celebrated in Persian epic literature, notably in [[Ferdowsi]]'s "[[Shahnameh]]". [[Avicenna]] (Ibn Sina), the famed Persian physician, also referenced wrestling in his medical encyclopedia "The Canon of Medicine" as a method of physical and mental well-being.

Ancient Egypt also valued wrestling highly. Tomb paintings from the Fifth Dynasty (c. 2470–2320 BCE) show young wrestlers in various positions, providing some of the earliest visual records of the sport.

== Etymology ==

The term "Gushtingiri" is believed to be derived from the Zoroastrian ritual belt called "Kusti" (also spelled "Kasti"), which symbolized the moral triad of "Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds." Worn during prayer, the belt was tied three times around the waist. Over time, the term for gripping or holding the belt ("Kusti-giri") evolved linguistically into "Gushtingiri," meaning "belt wrestling" or "wrestling by gripping the waist."

== Modern Development ==

During the Soviet era, efforts were made to standardize traditional wrestling forms. In 1963, Professor Abramov compiled the first set of official rules for Gushtingiri. Between 1993 and 2021, these rules were revised multiple times to meet modern competition standards.

In 2021, following a directive from the President of Tajikistan, [[Emomali Rahmon]], a working group was established to revitalize the sport. With support from the Mayor of [[Dushanbe]], [[Rustam Emomali]], a new uniform was designed and updated international rules were created. On June 22, 2022, the "'International Gushtingiri Federation (IGGF)'" was officially registered in Zurich, Switzerland, marking the beginning of its global activities.

== Current Status ==

Gushtingiri is now one of the most popular traditional sports in [[Central Asia]]. Though the sport is referred to by different names in local languages, the core objective remains the same: to throw the opponent onto their back using various grappling techniques.

== References ==

- * Ferdowsi, "Shahnameh"
- * Avicenna, "The Canon of Medicine"
- * Archaeological records – University of Pennsylvania, 1938
- * Archives of the International Gushtingiri Federation (IGGF)

[[Category:Grappling]]

[[Category:Traditional martial arts]]

[[Category:Wrestling]]

[[Category:Sport in Iran]]

[[Category:Sport in Tajikistan]]